On a bright morning April 19th, 1861 at the age of 20 years, 11 months, and 19 days the writer left his quiet and happy country home bidding adieu to his aged father and mother to fight the battles of his native state and country that gave him birth and which he loved. First volunteering as a private in the old Historical Tar Heel Company of Charlotte U.C. with Lewis S. Williams as captain and his permission to say a few words better says company I was soon called after one month in erect of destruction at Raleigh U. C. testing which me and heard the bells tolling the cessation of our grand old state we were formed into the 1st Regt. U.C. Volunteers for six months service with (Capt) J. H. Hill as Col. (Capt) C. E. Lea as 1st Col and (Capt) J. H. Lane as Major (As I kept ye diary can rest ye date) we were hurriedly transferred to Richmond on to Gettysburg. When we entered around life in reality about the 5th of June 61 under the command of Col. Magruder we receive orders to march down the Potomac to Bethesda church where we halted until that memorable morning June 10th.
At daybreak at the call of "long roll," troops gathered and proceeded along the road miles in search of the enemy, forming ahead as approaching from an enemy white column with 2000 brush in hand, becoming less to halt. Approached and informed us the enemy was within a short distance. She was flanked in ambush and with our troops returned to Ritetown our forces consisted of 1st U.C. Regt Infantry 2nd Company Infantry, a very small detachment Cavalry and 3rd Richmond Artillery consisting of 2 large guns and 2 small guns. While the enemy by "crack" forces were not less than five thousand perhaps considerably more. As the enemy appeared out the adjacent hill our Colonel 1st rifle pieces opened fire into Ritetown doing much damage to the enemy which was promptly returned by them but without injury to our forces. They promptly made an attack and as failed in falling back to the woods on the adjacent hill. After much sharp shooting during which our back and Clarence Wyatt of the Edgecomb Guards and S. Wyatt of the 2nd Carolina fell shedding their lives for their sacred cause.
Later in the afternoon the enemy made its final attack on our left led by the brave Col. Mathews, who on emerging from the ravine through which he closely led his men, fell together with every man who crossed the line with him. A return to our forces at this juncture his forces retook in great confusion leaving this dead and a portion of their muskets in our hands, thus ended the writer’s first experience and the first battle of the war. The first blood shed and first life given for the cause of the South was one by North Carolina boys. The term for which the writer enlisted, having it joined in, I landed. But, as all the writer enlisted at once as a nd St. with Frank L. Alexander, F. Neeld, co. Capt. J. L. 5-6 M. C. Capt. Paul F. F. Wallace, an Col. and you faced a part of General Matt Ralston’s Brigade. Capt. Alexander was killed in battle 16th June 1863. 18th St. J. F. McNeil was promoted to captain and the writer to 18th St. Which position he held until close of the war, never missing a single battle in which his commander was engaged. Never was with a day, nor should during the entire war from the 19th April 1861 until he was released from prison 26th June 1865.
The morning of 26th March 1865 in the attack on Fort Steadman in front of Petersburg Va. I commanded my Company and was on the extreme left of the lines. My Company was taken into all joined battle and captured with my brother officers first to Old Capitol Prison Washington and then to Fort Delaware and kept until 20th June 1865. I was in prison when President Lincoln was assassinated and I will remember my regret of the unrecorded for cowardly act of a man of noble spirit. While I differed in our views in the great question of state rights yet he was the champion of peace and Union and the Southern states are being well received at peace and harmony. The best hope for the world is the peace of the world. As for my life, I will try to live the Christian way and the good intentions are being well resided on both sides the country and I wish success to my fellow countrymen and feel proud.

and Lost 1st Ct. Co. 57th U.S. Reg.

This is a copy I received from a friend by Mr. Shepherd for his daughter Mrs. H. W. Leechman. His line really altered the Battle of Fredericksburg and wrote a copy of the same to us and a sketch.